

I have just enjoyed serving with you. I can't tell you how much I'm going to miss you. It's going to be a lot. I know you're going to miss everybody here as well. But we are all so much better for having served with you.

Thank you.

HONORING IKE SKELTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TIM MURPHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, what does an Irish Pennsylvania boy have to do with IKE SKELTON standing up here and talking? Actually, I have roots in Missouri. In Farmington, my ancestor, Sarah Barton Murphy, started the first Saturday school west of the Mississippi in Missouri. And that was a little story I told IKE. I don't know if he remembers it.

But it comes from times that IKE and I traveled together on congressional delegation trips. He had asked me to travel with him to Afghanistan and Iraq at Thanksgiving—we did that twice—giving up time with our families by traveling out there to be with the soldiers. Small codels as they were, but I think they meant a lot certainly to the soldiers that were sacrificing so much for our country. And I thought it pretty amazing that here was this gentleman, in the truest sense of the word, being willing to giving up his holidays with family to be over there, and I was certainly pleased and honored to go with him.

And we had some interesting times. A meeting with General Petraeus, a meeting with General McChrystal, seeing the ins and outs of what takes place in a war zone, talking to soldiers in the most candid ways about the stress that they face. And I know, for me, I learned a great deal from them, but I also learned a great deal from my friend, Congressman SKELTON, about the ins and outs of what takes place in the military through his chairmanship and ranking membership of what he's learned from the House Armed Services Committee.

But there's also things you learn about a person under times of stress.

IKE and I have the dubious distinction of being the only two Members of Congress ever injured in Iraq, and it happened on a dark night. We were traveling, after having met, I believe, with General Casey, on a road back to the Baghdad Airport when this up-armored minibus we were traveling in—referred to affectionately as an ice cream truck—suddenly hit something. We heard a boom. We're up in the air, bounced, rolled over the side, and both of us slid inside the interior. I was injured a bit. That doesn't matter. IKE had his own symptoms. And a lot of chaos occurred at that moment. And we learned what happens on a military site when there's an injury that occurs, that soldiers are swarming around securing the perimeter, ambulances ar-

iving trying to take care of both IKE and me at that moment. An incredible dedication and skill of these soldiers. We had intended to visit a hospital but not in a horizontal position.

What occurred afterwards, taking us in an ambulance, and we're both in some pain—nothing compared to what our soldiers face. But an interesting little thing happened with one of the staffers at that point. Erin reached in and patted my toe and said, "I'll pray for you." And the ambulance door closed. And IKE, always a man of good humor, said, What am I? Chopped liver? What's wrong here? No one's going to pray for me? He had issues, too.

We went to a hospital then in Baghdad. Some difficult moments. Hearing the cries of a young boy whose room was near ours who, we understand, his parents had just been killed, and he was hurt, too.

And then traveling over to Balad where our soldiers who were wounded pretty severely were all being prepped to take to Landstuhl Hospital in Germany, and to see what takes place as people with some pretty severe injuries were prepared, sometimes on basically a traveling intensive care unit with doctors and nurses around them.

And IKE and I are both on our helicopter trip over there. And having those moments when you're lying on this litter on this same helicopter that carries so many of our wounded soldiers, it gives you something to think about. And of course traveling over to Landstuhl on this big C-17 for several hours' flight.

But now and then I would hear this voice coming from either above me or below me, wherever we happened to be on that particular flight, there's the voice of IKE saying, Well, what do you think about this? Well, we're learning something here. Always just that little bit of humor and putting that little bit of perspective on an otherwise pretty stressful situation—not only of what was happening to us but being around all of these wounded and all of these doctors and nurses doing so much.

I'm sure IKE has lots of variations on the stories he tells, but what is important to hear is, after we came back, he had of course made sure that that one staffer who tapped my toe and said "I'll pray for you" understood that he wanted prayers, too. And it was some time after that, I believe, IKE, that what you received was a note that a mass was being said for you by the Pope. So you certainly outranked me on what was happening there.

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But it's his humor, it's his knowledge, it's his incredible class. A lot of times Americans may hear criticisms of Members of Congress. And you may hear the bipartisan attacks on each other, which is hardly bipartisan. That makes the evening news. When people call each other names, when they insult each other, when they play political games, that's going to make the

front page. What you don't hear about is the genuine friendships and respect we have for each other.

And let me tell you, IKE, I can't think of anybody in this House that I have more friendship and respect for than what you have taught me. The people of Missouri ought to be real proud that you served them for so long. I know they are. And I am mighty proud to have had the honor to serve with you, and a man that I can always call my friend. God bless you and thank you.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN IKE SKELTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. There is a button from an old Presidential campaign that says, "I Like IKE." In this case, I love IKE. We will have to have a new button to talk about IKE SKELTON. I arrived in the House 4 years ago on the Armed Services Committee, met IKE SKELTON, and recognized immediately that he wasn't just a friend of the generals and a friend of the powerful; he was a friend to everybody. And I had the great pleasure of traveling with him. And I saw the way he treated the very, very young soldiers.

And having been married to a young soldier at one time in my life, I recognized how overwhelming it was when anybody above the rank of sergeant spoke to young men and women. And here was the chairman of the Armed Services Committee of the United States of America bending over to get some words of advice from the young men and women of this country who serve us. And that has stuck with me, IKE.

It's true that you are an incredible scholar, a historian. If IKE says it's so, it is so. And he often told us what was so. And he gave us lists to read and things that we should do and things that we should know. And he was always right about that. And when I traveled with him abroad, the respect that we all received because we were with IKE SKELTON was absolutely impressive and overwhelming.

And so to say good-bye is extremely painful, but I think what we really need to do is celebrate the great gift that you gave this country, the gift that your family gave this country, the gift of you, your time, your knowledge, your experience, your wisdom. And the way the rest of the world views you is the way we view you, with tremendous respect, and admiration, and love. Thank you very much for your service.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN IKE SKELTON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.